

# LETTERS

OF THE LATE

Rev. Mr. LAURENCE STERNE,

To his most INTIMATE FRIENDS.

WITH A

FRAGMENT in the Manner of *Rabelais*.

TO WHICH ARE PREFIXED,

MEMOIRS of his LIFE and FAMILY,

WRITTEN by HIMSELF,

And published by his Daughter, Mrs. MEDALLE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.



D U B L I N:

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# LETTERS.

## LETTER LXXX.

To Miss S.

Bond-Street, April 9, 1767.

THIS letter, my dear Lydia, will distress thy good heart, for from the beginning thou wilt perceive no entertaining strokes of humour in it—I cannot be cheerful when a thousand melancholy ideas surround me—I have met with a loss of near fifty pounds, which I was taken in for in an extraordinary manner—but what is that loss in comparison of one I may experience?—Friendship is the balm and cordial of life, and without

without it, 'tis a heavy load not worth sustaining.—I am unhappy—thy mother and thyself at a distance from me, and what can compensate for such a destitution?—For God's sake persuade her to come and fix in England, for life is too short to waste in separation—and whilst she lives in one country, and I in another, many people will suppose it proceeds from choice—besides I want thee near me, thou child and darling of my heart!—I am in a melancholy mood, and my Lydia's eyes will smart with weeping when I tell her the cause that now affects me.—I am apprehensive the dear friend I mentioned in my last letter is going into a decline—I was with her two days ago, and I never beheld a being so altered—she has a tender frame, and looks like a drooping lilly, for the roses are fled from her cheeks—I can never see or talk to this incomparable woman without bursting into tears—I have a thousand obligations to her, and I owe her more than her whole sex, if not all the world put together.—She has a delicacy in her way of thinking that few possess—our conversations are of the most interesting nature, and she talks to me of quitting this world with more composure than others think of living in it.—I have wrote an epitaph, of which I send thee a copy.—'Tis expressive of her modest worth—but may heaven restore her! and may she live to write mine.

Columns, and labour'd urns but vainly shew,  
An idle scene of decorated woe.

The sweet companion, and the friend sincere,  
Need no mechanic help to force the tear.

In heart-felt numbers, never meant to shine,  
'Twill flow eternal o'er a hearse like thine;

'Twill

"Twill flow, while gentle goodness has one friend,  
Or kindred tempers have a tear to lend.

Say all that is kind of me to thy mother, and believe me, my Lydia, that I love thee most truly ---So adieu---I am what I ever was, and hope ever shall be, thy

Affectionate Father,

L. S.

As to Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ by your description he is a fat fool. I beg you will not give up your time to such a being---Send me some *batons pour les dents*---there are none good here.

### LETTER LXXXI.

To Mr. and Mrs. J.

Old Bond-street, April 21, 1767.

I AM sincerely affected, my dear Mr. and Mrs. J. \_\_\_\_\_ by your friendly enquiry, and the interest you are so good to take in my health. God knows I am not able to give a good account of myself, having passed a bad night in much feverish agitation---My physician ordered me to bed, and to keep therein 'till some favourable change---I fell ill the moment I got to my lodgings---he says it is owing to my taking James's powder, and venturing out on so cold a day as

Sunday

Sunday---but he is mistaken, for I am certain whatever bears that name must have efficacy with me---I was bled yesterday, and again to day, and have been almost dead, but this friendly enquiry from Gerrard-street has poured balm into what blood I have left---I hope still (and next to the sense of what I owe my friends) it shall be the last pleasurable sensation I will part with---if I continue mending, it will yet be some time before I shall have strength enough to get out in a carriage---my first visit will be a visit of true gratitude ---I leave my kind friends to guess where---a thousand blessings go along with this, and may Heaven preserve you both---Adieu, my dear sir, and dear lady.

I am your ever obliged,

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R   LXXXII.

To the Earl of ——.

Old Bond-street, May 1, 1767.

My Lord,

I WAS yesterday taking leave of all the town, with an intention of leaving it this day, but I am detained by the kindness of lord and lady S—, who have made a party to dine and sup on my account---I am impatient to set out for my solitude, for there the mind gains strength, and

learns

learns to lean upon herself. —In the world it seeks or accepts of a few treacherous supports—the feigned compassion of one—the flattery of a second—the civilities of a third—the friendship of a fourth—they all deceive, and bring the mind back to where mine is retreating, to retirement, reflection, and books. My departure is fixed for to-morrow morning, but I could not think of quitting a place where I have received such numberless and unmerited civilities from your lordship, without returning my most grateful thanks, as well as my hearty acknowledgments for your friendly enquiry from Bath. Illness, my Lord, has occasioned my silence—Death knocked at my door, but I would not admit him—the call was both unexpected and unpleasant—and I am seriously worn down to a shadow—and still very weak, but weak as I am, I have as whimsical a story to tell you as ever befell one of my family—Shandy's nose, his name, his fash-windows are fools to it—it will serve at least to amuse you—The injury I did myself last month in catching cold upon James's powder—fell, you must know, upon the worst part it could—the most painful, and most dangerous of any in the human body. It was on this crisis I called in an able surgeon, and with him an able physician (both my friends) to inspect my disaster----'tis a venereal case, cried my two scientific friends----'tis impossible, however to be that replied I—for I have had no commerce whatever with the sex, not even with my wife, added I, these fifteen years.—You are however, my good friend, said the surgeon, or there is no such case in the world—what the devil, said I, without knowing woman?—We will not reason about it, said the physician, but you

must

must undergo a course of mercury—I will lose my life first, said I—and trust to nature, to time, or at the worst to death—so I put an end, with some indignation, to the conference—and determined to bear all the torments I underwent, and ten times more, rather than submit to be treated like a *sinner*, in a point where I had acted like a *saint*.—Now as the father of mischief would have it, who has no pleasure like that of dishonouring the righteous, it so fell out that from the moment I dismissed my doctors, my pains began to rage with a violence not to be expressed, or supported. Every hour became more intolerable.—I was got to bed, cried out, and raved the whole night, and was got up so near dead, that my friends insisted upon my sending again for my physician and surgeon. I told them upon the word of a man of honour they were both mistaken, as to my case—but though they had reasoned wrong, they might act right; but that sharp as my sufferings were, I felt them not so sharp as the imputation which a venereal treatment of my case laid me under—They answered that these taints of the blood laid dormant twenty years, but they would not reason with me in a point wherein I was so delicate, but would do all the office for which they were called in, namely to put an end to my torment, which otherwise would put an end to me—and so I have been compelled to surrender myself—and thus, my dear lord, has your poor friend with all sensibilities been suffering the chastisement of the grossest sensualist.—Was it not as ridiculous an embarrassment as ever Yorick's spirit was involved in?—Nothing but the purest conscience of innocence could have tempted me to write this story to my wife,

wife, which by the bye would make no bad anecdote in Tristram Shandy's life—I have mentioned it in my journal to Mrs. —— In some respects there is no difference between my wife and herself — when they fare alike, neither can reasonably complain.—I have just received letters from France, with some hints that Mrs. Sterne and my Lydia are coming to England, to pay me a visit — if your time is not better employed, Yorick flatters himself he shall receive a letter from your lordship, *en attendant*. I am with the greatest regard,

My Lord,  
your lordship's  
most faithful humble servant,  
L. STERNE.

## LETTER LXXXIII.

To J. D——n, Esq;

Old Bond-street, Friday morning.

I WAS going, my dear D——n, to bed before I received your kind enquiry, and now my chaise stands at my door to take and convey this poor body to its legal settlement.—I am ill, very ill—I languish most affectingly—I am sick both soul and body—it is a cordial to me to hear it is different with you — no man interests himself more in your happiness, and I am glad you are in so fair a road to it—enjoy it long, my D. whilst

I —

I—no matter what—but my feelings are too nice for the world I live in—things will mend.—I dined yesterday with lord and lady S — we talked much of you, and your goings on, for every one knows why Sunbury Hill is so pleasant a situation.—You rogue! you have locked up my boots—and I go bootless home—and fear I shall go bootless all my life—Adieu, gentlest and best of souls—adieu.

I am yours most affectionately,

LAU. STERNE.

### LETTER LXXXIV.

To J. H. S. Esq.

Newark, Monday ten o'clock in the morn-

My dear Cousin,

I HAVE got conveyed thus far like a bale of cadaverous goods consigned to Pluto and company—lying in the bottom of my chaise most of the route, upon a large pillow which I had the *prevoyance* to purchase before I set out—I am worn out—but press on to Barnby Moor to night and if possible to York the next.—I know not what is the matter with me—but some *derangement* presses hard upon this machine—still I think it will not be overset this bout—My love to G— We shall all meet from the east, and from the

south—“

Vc

south, and (as at the last) be happy together—  
My kind respects to a few.—I am, dear H.  
truly yours,

L. STERNE.

LETTER LXXXV.

From Ignatius Sancho, to Mr. Sterne.

Reverend Sir,

IT would be an insult on your humanity (or perhaps look like it,) to apologize for the liberty I am taking.—I am one of those people whom the vulgar and illiberal call negroes.—The first part of my life was rather unlucky, as I was placed in a family who judged ignorance the best and only security for obedience.—A little reading and writing I got by unwearyed application.—The latter part of my life has been, thro' God's blessing, truly fortunate—having spent it in the service of one of the best and greatest families in the kingdom—my chief pleasure has been books—Philanthropy I adore—How very much, good Sir, am I (amongst millions) indebted to you for the character of your amiable uncle Toby!—I declare I would walk ten miles in the dog days, to shake hands with the honest corporal.—Your sermons have touched me to the heart, and I hope have amended it, which brings me to the point.— In your tenth discourse, page 140, in the second volume—is this very affecting passage—"Consider how great a part of our species in

all ages down to this—have been trod under the feet of cruel and capricious tyrants, who would neither hear their cries, nor pity their distresses.—Consider slavery—what it is—how bitter a draught—and how many millions are made to drink of it.”—Of all my favourite authors not one has drawn a tear in favour of my miserable black brethren—excepting yourself, and the humane author of Sir Geo. Ellison.—I think you will forgive me; I am sure you will applaud me for beseeching you to give one half hour’s attention to slavery, as it is at this day practised in our West-Indies.—That subject handled in your striking manner would ease the yoke (perhaps) of many—but if only of one—gracious God! what a feast to a benevolent heart! and sure I am, you are an epicurean in acts of charity.—You who are universally read, and as universally admired—you could not fail.—Dear Sir, think in me you behold the uplifted hands of thousands of my brother moors. Grief (you pathetically observe) is eloquent: figure to yourself their attitudes; hear their supplicating addresses!—alas! you cannot refuse.—Humanity must comply—in which hope I beg permission to subscribe myself,

Reverend Sir, &c.

I. S.

LET

## LETTER LXXXVI.

From Mr. Sterne, to Ignatius Sancho.

Coxwold, July 27, 1766.

HERE is a strange coincidence, Sancho, in the little events (as well as in the great ones) of this world: for I had been writing a tender tale of the sorrows of a friendless poor negro-girl, and my eyes had scarce done smarting with it, when your letter of recommendation, in behalf of so many of her brethren and sisters, came to me—but why *her brethren?* or yours, Sancho! any more than mine? It is by the finest tints, and most insensible gradations, that nature descends from the fairest face about St. James's, to the footlest complexion in Africa:—at which tint of these is it, that the ties of blood are to cease? and how many shades must we descend lower still in the scale, ere mercy is to vanish with them? But 'tis no uncommon thing, my good Sancho, for one half of the world to use the other half of it like brutes, and then endeavour to make 'em so.—For my own part, I never look *westward*, (when I am in a pensive mood at least) but I think of the burthen's which our brothers and sisters are *there* carrying, and could I ease their shoulders from one ounce of them, I declare I would set out this hour upon a pilgrimage to Mecca for their sakes—which by the bye, Sancho,

cho, exceeds your walk of ten miles in about the same proportion, that a visit of humanity should one of mere form.—However, if you meant my uncle Toby more he is your debtor.—If I can weave the tale I have wrote into the work I am about—'tis at the service of the afflicted—and a much greater matter; for in serious truth, it casts a sad shade upon the world, that so great a part of it are, and have been so long bound in chains of darkness, and in chains of misery; and I cannot but both respect and felicitate you, that by so much laudable diligence you have broke the one—and that by falling into the hands of so good and merciful a family, Providence has rescued you from the other.

And so, good-hearted Sancho, adieu! and believe me I will not forget your letter.

Yours,

L. STERNE.

### LETTER LXXXVII.

To Ignatius Sancho.

Bond-street, Saturday.

I WAS very sorry, my good Sancho, that I was not at home to return my compliments by you for the great courtesy of the Duke of M—g's family to me, in honouring my list of subscribers with their names—for which I bear them all thanks.—But you have something to add,

Sancho,

Sancho, to what I owe your good-will also on this account, and that is to send me the subscription money, which I find a necessity of dunning my best friends for before I leave town—to avoid the perplexities of both keeping pecuniary accounts (for which I have very slender talents) and collecting them (for which I have neither strength of body or mind) and so, good Sancho, dun the Duke of M. the Dutchess of M. and Lord M. for their subscriptions, and lay the sin, and money with it too, at my door.—I wish so good a family every blessing they merit, along with my humblest compliments. You know, Sancho, that I am your friend and well-wisher,

L. STERNE.

P. S. I leave town on Friday morning—and should on Thursday, but that I stay to dine with lord and lady S—

### LETTER LXXXVIII.

To Ignatius Sancho.

Coxwold, June 30.

I MUST acknowledge the courtesy of my good friend Sancho's letter, were I ten times busier than I am, and must thank him too for the many expressions of his good will, and good opinion.—'Tis all affectation to say a man is not gratified with being praised—we only want it to be

sincere—and then it will be taken, Sancho, as kindly as yours. I left town very poorly—and with an idea I was taking leave of it for ever—but good air, a quiet retreat, and quiet reflections along with it, with an ass to milk, and another to ride out upon (if I chuse it) all together do wonders. —— I shall live this year at least, I hope, be it but to give the world, before I quit it, as good impressions of me, as you have, Sancho. I would only covenant for just so much health and spirits, as are sufficient to carry my pen thro' the task I have set it this summer.—But I am a resigned being, Sancho, and take health and sickness as I do light and darkness, or the vicissitudes of seasons—that is, just as it pleases God to send them—and accommodate myself to their periodical returns, as well as I can—only taking care, whatever befalls me in this silly world—not to lose my temper at it.—This I believe, friend Sancho, to be the truest philosophy—for this we must be indebted to ourselves, but not to our fortunes.—Farewel—I hope you will not forget your custom of giving me a call at my lodgings next winter—in the mean time, I am very cordially,

My honest friend Sancho,

Yours,

L. STERNE.

L E T.

## LETTER LXXXIX.

To Mrs. H.

Coxwold, October 12, 1767.

EVER since my dear H. wrote me word she was mine, more than ever woman was, I have been racking my memory to inform me where it was that you and I had that affair together.—People think that I have had many, some in body, some in mind, but as I told you before, you have had me more than any woman—therefore you must have had me, H.—, both in mind, and in body,—Now I cannot recollect where it was, nor exactly when—it could not be the lady in Bond-street, or Grosvenor-street, or \_\_\_\_\_ Square, or Pall-mall.—We shall make it out, H. when we meet—I impatiently long for it—'tis no matter—I cannot now stand writing to you to-day—I will make it up next post—for dinner is upon table, and if I make Lord F—— stay, he will not frank this.—How do you do? Which parts of Trifram do you like best?—God bless you.

Yours,

L. STERNE.

## LETTER XC.

To Mrs. H.

Coxwold, Nov. 15, 1767.

NOW be a good dear woman, my H—, and execute these commissions well—and when I see you I will give you a kiss—there's for you!—But I have something else for you which I am fabricating at a great rate, and that is my Sentimental Journey, which shall make you cry as much as it has affected me—or I will give up the business of sentimental writing—and write to the body—that is H. what I am doing in writing to you—but you are a *good body*, which is worth half a score mean souls.—

I am yours, &amp;c. &amp;c.

L. SMANDY.

To his Excellency Sir G. M.

Coxwold, Dec. 3, 1767.

My dear friend,

FOR tho' you are his Excellency, and I still but parson Yorick—I still must call you so—and

—and were you to be next Emperor of Russia, I could not write to you, or speak of you, under any other relation—I felicitate you, I don't say how much, because I can't—I always had something like a kind of revelation within me, which pointed out this track for you, in which you are so happily advanced—it was not only my wishes for you, which were ever ardent enough to impose upon a visionary brain, but I thought I actually saw you just where you now are—and that is just, my dear Macartney, where you should be.

—I should long, long ago have acknowledged the kindness of a letter of yours from Petersbourg; but hearing daily accounts you was leaving it—this is the first time I knew well *where* my thanks would find you—how they will find you, I know well—that is—the same I ever knew you. In three weeks I shall kiss your hand—and sooner, if I can finish my Sentimental Journey.—The deuce take all sentiments! I wish there was not one in the world!—My wife is come to pay me a sentimental visit as far as from Avignon—and the politesses arising from such a proof of her urbanity, have robb'd me of a month's writing, or I had been in town now.—I am going to lye-in; being at Christmas at my full reckoning—and unleis what I shall bring forth is not press'd to death by these devils of printers, I shall have the honour of presenting to you a couple of as clean brats as ever chaste brain conceiv'd—they are frolicksome too, *mais cela n'empeche pas*—I put your name down with many wrong and right honourables, knowing you would take it not well if I did not make myself happy with it. Adieu, my dear friend,

Believe me yours, &c. L. STERNE.

P. S. If you see Mr. Crawford, tell him I greet him kindly.

## LETTER XCII.

To J. H. S. Esq.

LITERAS vestras lepidissimas, mi consobrine, consobrinis meis omnibus carior, accepi die Veneris; sed posta non rediebat versus aquilonem eo die, aliter scripsissem prout desiderabis: nescio quid est materia cum me, sed sum fatigatus & ægrotus de meâ uxore plus quam unquam— & sum possessus cum diabolo qui pellet me in urbem— & tu es possessus cum eodem malo spiritu qui te tenet in deserto esse tentatum ancillis tuis, et perturbatum uxore tuâ—crede mihi, mi Antoni, quod isthæc non est via ad salutem sive hodiernam, sive æternam; num tu incipis cogitare de pecuniâ, quæ, ut ait Sanctus Paulus, est radix omnium malorum, & non satis dicis in corde tuo, ego Antonius de Castello Infirmo, sum jam quadraginta & plus annos natus, & expievi octavum meum lustrum, et tempus est me curare, & me ipsum Antonium facere hominem felicem, & liberam, et mihi mit ipsi benefacere, ut exhortatur Solomon, qui dicit quod nihil est melius in hac vitâ, quam quod homo vivat festivè, & quod edat et bibat, & bono fruatur, quia hoc est sua portio & dos in hoc mundo.

Nunc te scire vellemus, quod non debo esse reprehendi pro festinando eundo ad Londonum,  
quia

quia Deus est testis, quod non proprio præ gloriâ, & pro me ostendere; nam diabolus iste qui me intravit, non est diabolus vanus, at consobrinus suus Lucifer—sed est diabolus amabundus, qui non vult sinere me esse solum; nam cum non cumbendo cum uxore meâ sum mentulatior quam par est—& sum mortaliter in amore—& sum fatuus; ergo tu me, mi care Antoni, excusabis, quoniam tu fuisti in amore, & par mare & par terras ivisti & festinasti sicut diabolus, eodem te propellente diabolo. Habeo multa ad te scribere —sed scribo hanc epistolam, in domo coffeatariâ & plenâ sociorum strepitosorum, qui non permittent me cogitare unam cogitationem.

Saluta amicum Panty meum, cuius literis respondebo—saluta amicos in domo Gisbrosensi, & oro, credas me vinculo consobrinitatis & amoris ad te, mi Antoni, devinctissimum,

L. STERNE.

### LETTER XCIII.

To A. L——e, Esq;

Coxwold, June 7, 1767.

Dear L——e,

I HAD not been many days at this peaceful cottage before your letter greeted me with the seal of friendship, and most cordially do I thank you for so kind a proof of your good will—I was truly anxious to hear of the rece-

very,

very of my sentimental friend—but I would not write to enquire after her, unless I could have sent her the testimony without the tax, for even how-d'yes to invalids, or those that have lately been so, either call to mind what is past or what may return——at least I find it so.—I am as happy as a prince, at Coxwold—and I wish you could see in how princely a manner I live—  
 'Tis a land of plenty. I sit down alone to venison, fish and wild fowl, or a couple of fowls or ducks, with curds, and strawberries, and cream, and all the simple plenty which a rich valley under (Hamilton Hills) can produce—with a clean cloth on my table—and a bottle of wine on my right hand to drink your health. I have a hundred hens and chickens about my yard—and not a parishioner catches a hare, or a rabbit, or a trout, but he brings it as an offering to me. If solitude would cure a love-sick heart, I would give you an invitation—but absence and time lessen no attachment which virtue inspires.—I am in high spirits—care never enters this cottage—I take the air every day in my post-chaise, with my two long-tail'd horses—they turn out good ones; and as to myself, I think I am better upon the whole for the medicines, and regimen I submitted to in town—May you, dear L——e, want neither one, nor the other.

Yours truly,

L. STERNE.

LET-

Amrit ied. Ho bind of you new ringes. Soe  
had, seyle con New I another iel. my new old  
ringes.

## LETTER XCIV.

To the same.

Coxwold; June 30, 1767.

I AM in still better health, my dear L . . e, than when I wrote last to you—owing I believe to my riding out every day with my friend H . . . whose castle lies near the sea—and there is a beach as even as a mirror, of five miles in length before it—where we daily run races in our chaises, with one wheel in the sea, and the other on the land.—D . . . has obtain'd his fair Indian, and has this post sent a letter of enquiries after Yorick, and his Bramine. He is a good soul, and interests himself much in our fate—I cannot forgive you, L . . . e, for your folly in saying you intend to get introduced to the — I despise them, and I shall hold your understanding much cheaper than I now do, if you persist in a resolution so unworthy of you.—I suppose Mrs. J — telling you they were sensible, is the ground-work you go upon—by—they are not clever; tho' what is commonly call'd wit, may pass for literature on the other side of Temple-bar.—You say Mrs. J — thinks them amiable—the judges too favourably; but I have put a stop to her intentions of visiting them.—They are bitter enemies of mine, and I am even with them. La Bramine assured me they used their

their endeavours with her to break off her friendship with me, for reasons I will not write, but tell you.—I said enough of them before she left England, and tho' she yielded to me in every other point, yet in this she obstinately persisted—Strange infatuation!—but I think I have effected my purpose by a falsity, which Yorick's friendship to the Bramine can only justify.—I wrote her word that the most amiable of women reiterated my request, that she would not write to them. I said too, she had conceal'd many things for the sake of her peace of mind—when in fact, L——e, this was merely a child of my own brain, made Mrs. J——'s by adoption, to enforce the argument I had before urged so strongly.—Do not mention this circumstance to Mrs. J——, 'twould displease her—and I had no design in it but for the Bramine to be a friend to herself.—I ought now to be busy from sun rise, to sun set, for I have a book to write—a wife to receive—an estate to sell—a parish to superintend, and what is worst of all, a disquieted heart to reason with—these are continual calls upon me.—I have received half a dozen letters to press me to join my friends at Scarborough, but I am at present deaf to them all.—I perhaps may pass a few days there something later in the season, not at present—and so, dear L. . . . e, adieu;

I am most cordially yours,

**L. STERNE.**

**L E T.**

LETTER XCV.

To Mr. and Mrs. J.-

Coxwold, July 6, 1767.

IT is with as much true gratitude as ever heart  
I felt, that I sit down to thank my dear friends,  
Mr. and Mrs. J——, for the continuation of  
their attention to me; but for this last instance of  
their humanity and politeness to me, I must ever  
be their debtor—I never can thank you enough,  
my dear friends, and yet I thank you from my  
soul—and for the single day's happiness your  
goodness would have sent me, I wish I could send  
you back thousands—I cannot, but they will  
come of themselves—and so God bless you.—I  
have had twenty times my pen in my hand since  
I came down to write one letter to you both in  
Gerrard-street—but I am a shy kind of a soul at  
the bottom, and have a jealousy about troubling  
my friends, especially about myself.—I am now  
got perfectly well, but was a month after my  
arrival in the country in but a poor state—my  
body has got the start, and is at present more at  
ease than my mind—but this world is a school  
of trials, and so heaven's will be done!—I hope  
you have both enjoyed all that I have wanted—  
and to compleat your joy, that your little lady  
flourishes like a vine at your table, to which I  
hope to see her preferred by next winter.—I am  
now

now beginning to be truly busy with my Sentimental Journey—the pains and sorrows of this life having retarded its progress—but I shall make up my lee-way, and overtake every body in a very short time.—

What can I send you that Yorkshire produces? tell me—I want to be of use to you, for I am, my dear friends, with the truest value and esteem,

Your ever obliged,

L. STERNE.

**LETTER XCVI.**

To Mr. P. at Paris.

York, July, 29, 1767.

My dear P.

BE so kind as to forward what letters are arrived for Mrs. S. at your office by to-day's post, or the next, and she will receive them before she quits Avignon, for England—she wants to lay out a little money in an annuity for her daughter—advise her to get her own life ensured in London, lest my Lydia should die before her.—If there are any packets, send them with the ninth volume of Shandy, which she has failed of getting—she says she has drawn for fifty louis—when she leaves Paris, send by her my account.—Have you got me any French subscriptions,

scriptions, or subscriptions in France?—Present my kindest service to Miss P. I know her politeness and good nature will incline her to give Mrs. J. her advice about what she may venture to bring over.—I hope every thing goes on well, though never half so well as I wish—God prosper you, my dear friend—Believe me most warmly

Yours,

L. STERNE.

The sooner you send me the gold snuff-box, the better—'tis a present from my best friend.

**LETTER XCVII.**

To Mr. and Mrs. J.

Coxwold, August 2, 1767.

MY dear friends Mr. and Mrs. J.—are infinitely kind to me in sending now and then a letter to enquire after me—and to acquaint me how they are.—You cannot conceive, my dear lady, how truly I bear a part in your illness.—I wish Mr. J.— would carry you to the South of France in pursuit of health—but why need I wish it when I know his affection will make him do that and ten times as much to prevent a return of those symptoms which alarmed him so much in the spring—Your politeness and humanity is always contriving to treat me agreeably, and

and what you promise next winter, will be perfectly so—but you must get well—and your little dear girl must be of the party with her parents and friends to give it a relish—I am sure you shew no partiality but what is natural and praise-worthy in behalf of your daughter, but I wonder my friends will not find her a play-fellow, and I both hope and advise them not to venture along through this warfare of life without two strings at least to their bow—I had letters from France by last night's post, by which (by some fatality) I find not one of my letters has reached Mrs. S.— This gives me concern, as it wears the aspect of unkindness, which she by no means merits from me.— My wife and dear girl are coming to pay me a visit for a few months: I wish I may prevail with them to tarry longer.— You must permit me, dear Mrs. J. to make my Lydia known to you, if I can prevail with my wife to come and spend a little time in London, as she returns to France.— I expect a small parcel— may I trouble you before you write next to send to my lodgings to ask if there is any thing directed to me that you can enclose under cover? — I have but one excuse for this freedom, which I am prompted to use from a persuasion that it is doing you pleasure to give you an opportunity of doing an obliging thing—and as to myself I rest satisfied, for 'tis only scoring up another debt of thanks to the millions I owe you both already—Receive a thousand and a thousand thanks, yes and with them ten thousand friendly wishes for all you wish in this world—May my friend Mr. J. continue bless'd with good health, and may his good lady get perfectly well, there being no woman's health or comfort

comfort I so ardently pray for.—Adieu, my dear friends—believe me most truly and faithfully yours,

L. STERNE.

P. S. In Eliza's last letter dated from St. Jago she tells me, as she does you, that she is extremely ill—God protect her.—By this time surely she has set foot upon dry land at Madrass—I heartily wish her well, and if Yorick was with her, he would tell her so—but he is cut off from this, by bodily absence—I am present with her in spirit however—but what is that you will say?

LETTER XCVIII.

To J. H. S. Esq;

Coxwould, August 11, 1767.

My dear H.

I AM glad all has passed with so much amity *inter te & filium Marcum tuum*, and that Madame has found grace in thy sight --- All is well that ends well --- and so much for moralizing upon it. I wish you could, or would, take up your parable, and prophecy as much good concerning me and my affairs. — Not one of my letters have got to Mrs. S — since the notification of her intentions, which has a pitiful

ful air on my side, though I have wrote her six or seven, — I imagine she will be here the latter end of next September, thou I have no date for it, but her impatience, which having suffered by my supposed silence, I am persuaded will make her fear the worst — if that is the case she will fly to England — a most natural conclusion. —

You did well to discontinue all commerce with James's powder — as you are so well, rejoice therefore, and let your heart be merry — mine ought upon the same score — for I never have been so well since I left college — and should be a marvellous happy man, but for some reflection which bow down my spirits — but if I live but even three or four years, I will acquit myself with honour --- and --- no matter! we will talk this over when we meet. — If all ends as temperately as with you, and that I find grace, &c. &c. I will come and sing Te Deum, or drink *poculum elevatum*, or do any thing with you in the world. — I should depend upon G—'s critick upon my head, as much as Moliere's old woman upon his comedies — when you do not want her society let it be carried into her bed-chamber to flay her, or clap it upon her bum — to — and give her my blessing as you do it —

My postillion has set me a-ground for a week by one of my pistols bursting in his hand, which he taking for granted to be quite shot off — he instantly fell upon his knees and said (Our Father, which art in Heaven, hallowed be thy Name) at which, like a good Christian, he stopped, not remembering any more of it — the affair was not so bad as he at first thought, for it has only bursten two of his fingers (he says). — I long to

to return to you, but I sit here alone as solitary and sad as a tom cat, which by the bye is all the company I keep --- he follows me from the parlour, to the kitchen, into the garden, and every place --- I wish I had a dog --- my daughter will bring me one —— and so God be about you, and strengthen your faith --- I am affectionately, dear cousin, yours,

L. S.

My service to the C.... though they are from home, and to Panty.

## LETTER XCIX.

To Mr. and Mrs. J.

Coxwold, August 13, 1767.

My dear Friends,

I BUT copy your great civility to me in writing you word, that I have this moment received another letter wrote eighteen days after the date of the last from St. Jago — If our poor friend could have wrote another letter to England, you would in course have had it --- but I fear from the circumstance of great hurry and bodily disorder in which she was, when she dispatched this, she might not have time. --- In case it has so fallen out, I send you the contents of what I have received --- and that is a melancholy history of herself and sufferings, since

since they left St. Jago -- continual and most violent rheumatism all the time --- a fever brought on with fits, and attended with delirium, and every terrifying symptom --- the recovery from this left her low and emaciated to a skeleton. --- I give you the pain of this detail with a bleeding heart, knowing how much at the same time it will affect yours. --- The three or four last days of her journal leave us with hopes she will do well at last, for she is more cheerful -- and seems to be getting into better spirits; and health will follow in course. They have crossed the line --- are much becalmed, which with other delays she fears they will lose their passage to Madras --- and be some months sooner for it at Bombay. --- Heaven protect her, for she suffers much, and with uncommon fortitude. --- She writes much to me about her dear friend Mrs. J\_\_\_\_\_ in her last packet. --- In truth my good lady, she loves and honours you from her heart, but if she did not, I should not esteem her, or wish her so well as I do. --- Adieu, my dear friends --- you have few in the world more truly and cordially

Yours,

L. STERNE.

P. S. I have just received, as a present from a man I shall ever love, a most elegant gold snuff box, fabricated for me at Paris --- 'tis not the first pledge I have received of his friendship --- May I presume to enclose you a letter of chit-chat which I shall write to Eliz? I know you will write yourself, and my letter may have the honour to *chaperon* yours to India --- they will neither of them be the worse received for going together in company, but I fear they will get late in the

the year to their destined port, as they go first to Bengal.

## LETTER C.

To Miss S\_\_\_\_\_.

Coxwold, August 24, 1767.

I AM truly surprised, my dear Lydia, that my last letter has not reached thy mother, and thyself --- it looks most unkind on my part, after your having wrote me word of your mother's intention of coming to England, that she has not received my letter to welcome you both --- and though in that I said I wished you would defer your journey 'till March, for before that time I should have published my sentimental work, and should be in town to receive you --- yet I will shew you more real politeness than any you have met with in France, as mine will come warm from the heart. --- I am sorry you are not here at the races, but *les fêtes champêtres* of the Marquis de Sade have made you amends. --- I know B --- very well, and he is what in France would be called admirable—that would be but so-so here — You are right — he studies nature more than any, or rather most of the French comedians — If the Empress of Russia pays him and his wife a pension of twenty thousand livres a year, I think he is very well off. — The folly of staying 'till after twelve for supper — that you two excommunicated

municated beings might have meat! — “ his conscience would not let it be served before.” — Surely the Marquis thought you both, being English, could not be satisfied without it. — I would have given not my gown and cassock (for I have but one) but my topáz ring to have seen the *petits maitres et maitresses* go to mas, after having spent the night in dancing. — As to my pleasures they are few in compass: — My poor cat sits purring beside me — your lively French dog shall have his place on the other side of my fire — but if he is as devilish as when I last saw him, I must tutor him, for I will not have my cat abused — in short I will have nothing devilish about me — a combustion would spoil a sentimental thought.

Another thing I must desire — do not be alarmed — 'tis to throw all your rouge pots into the Sorgue before you set out — I will have no rouge put on in Ehgland — and do not bewail them as — did her silver seringue or glyster equipage which she lost in a certain river — but take a wise resolution of doing without rouge — I have been three days ago bad again — with a spitting of blood — and that unfeeling brute \*\*\* came and drew my curtains, and with a voice like a trumpet, halloo'd in my ear — z—ds, what a fine kettle of fish have you brought yourself to, MR. S — ! In a faint voice, I bade him leave me, for comfort sure was never administered in so rough a manner. — Tell your mother I hope she will purchase what either of you may want at Paris — 'tis an occasion not to be lost — so write to me from Paris that I may come and meet you in my post-chaise with my long-tailed horses — and the moment

ment you have both put your feet in it, call it hereafter yours. --- Adieu, dear Lydia --- believe me, what I ever shall be,

Your affectionate father,

L. STERNE.

I think I shall not write to Avignon any more, but you will find one for you at Paris --- once more adieu.

### LETTER CI.

To Sir W.

September 19, 1767.

My dear Sir,

YOU are perhaps the drollest being in the universe — Why do you banter me so about what I wrote to you? — Tho' I told you, every morning I jump'd into Venus's lap (meaning thereby the sea) was you to infer from that, that I leap'd into the ladies beds afterwards? — The body guides you — the mind me. — I have wrote the most whimsical letter to a lady that was ever read, and talk'd of body and soul too — I said she had made me vain, by saying she was mine more than ever woman was — but she is not the lady of Bond-street, nor — square, nor the lady who supp'd with me in Bond-street on scollop'd oysters, and other

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such things —— nor did she ever go *tete-a-tete* with me to Salt Hill. —— Enough of such nonsense —— The past is over — and I can justify myself unto myself — can you do as much? — No faith! — “ You can feel!” Aye, so can my cat, when he hears a female caterwauling on the house top — but caterwauling disgusts me. I had rather raise a gentle flame, than have a different one raised in me. — Now I take heav'n to witness, after all this *bardinage* my heart is innocent — and the sporting of my pen is equal, just equal, to what I did in my boyish days, when I got astride of a stick, and gallop'd away — the truth is this — that my pen governs me — not me my pen. — You are much to blame if you dig for marble, unless you are sure of it. — I was once such a puppy myself, as to pare, and burn, and had my labour for my pains, and two hundred pounds out of pocket. — Curse on farming (said I) I will try if the pen will not succeed better than the spade — — The following up of that affair (I mean farming) made me lose my temper, and a cart load of turneps was (I thought) very dear at two hundred pounds. —

In all your operations may your own good sense guide you — — bought experience is the devil. — — Adieu, adieu! — Believe me

Yours most truly,

L. STERNE.

LET.

LETTER CII.

To the same.

Coxwold, Sept. 27, 1767.

Dear Sir,

YOU are arrived at Scarborough, when all the world has left it — but you are an unaccountable being, and so there is nothing more to be said on the matter --- You wish me to come to Scarborough, and join you to read a work that is not finish'd — besides I have other things in my head. --- My wife will be here in three or four days, and I must not be found straying in the wilderness — but I have been there. — As for meeting you at Bluit's, with all my heart — I will laugh and drink my barley water with you --- As soon as I have greeted my wife and daughter, and hired them a house at York, I shall go to London where you generally are in spring — and then my Sentimental Journey will, I dare say, convince you that my feelings are from the heart, and that that heart is not of the worst of molds --- praised be God for my sensibility! Though it has often made me wretched, yet I would not exchange it for all the pleasures the grossest sensualist ever felt. --- Write to me the day you will be at York — 'tis ten to one but I may introduce you to my wife and daughter. Believe me,

My good Sir,

Ever yours,

L. STERNE.

## LETTER CIII.

To Mr. P. at Paris.

York, October 1, 1767.

Dear Sir,

I HAVE ordered my friend Becket to advance I for two months your account which my wife this day deliver'd --- she is in raptures with all your civilities. --- This is to give you notice to draw upon your correspondent --- and Becket will deduct out of my publication. --- To-morrow morning I repair with her to Coxwold, and my Lydia seems transported with the sight of me. --- Nature, dear P ---, breathes in all her composition; and except a little vivacity --- which is a fault in the world we live in --- I am fully content with her mother's care of her --- Pardon this digression from business --- but 'tis natural to speak of those we love. --- As to the subscriptions which your friendship has procured me, I must have them to incorporate with my lists which are to be prefix'd to the first volume. --- My wife and daughter join in millions of thanks --- they will leave me the first of December. --- Adieu, adieu --- believe me,

Yours most truly,

L. STERNE.

LET.

## LETTER CIV.

To Mr, and Mrs. J—.

Coxwold, October 3, 1767.

I HAVE suffered under a strong desire for above this fortnight, to send a letter of enquiries after the health and the well-being of my dear friends, Mr. and Mrs. J —, and I do assure both, 'twas merely owing to a little modesty in my temper not to make my good-will troublesome, where I have so much, and to those I never think of, but with ideas of sensibility and obligation, that I have refrain'd — Good God! to think I could be in town, and not go the first step I made to Gerrard-Street! — My mind and body must be at sad variance with each other, should it ever fall out that it is not both the first and last place also where I shall betake myself, were it only to say, "God bless you." — May you have every blessing he can send you! 'tis a part of my litany, where you will always have a place whilst I have a tongue to repeat it. — And so you heard I had left Scarborough, which you would no more credit, than the reasons assigned for it — I thank you for it kindly — tho' you have not told me what they were; being a shrewd divine, I think I can guess. — I was ten days at Scarborough in September, and was hospitably entertained by one of the best of our Bishops;

shops; who, as he kept house there, pres'd me to be with him — and his household consisted of a gentleman and two ladies — which, with the good Bishop, and myself, made so good a party that we kept much to ourselves. — I made in this time a connection of great friendship with my mitred host, who would gladly have taken me with him back to Ireland. — However, we all left Scarborough togeher, and lay fifteen miles off, where we kindly parted — Now it was supposed (as I have since heard) that I e'en went on with the party to London, and this I suppose was the reason assigned for my being there. — I dare say charity would add a little to the account, and give out that 'twas on the score of one, and perhaps both of the ladies — and I will excuse charity on that head, for a heart disengaged could not well have done better. --- I have been hard writing ever since --- and hope by Christmas I shall be able to give a gentle rap at your door --- and tell you how happy I am to see my two good friends. --- I assure you I spur on my Pegasus more violently upon that account, and am now determined not to draw bit, till I have finish'd this sentimental Journey — which I hope to lay at your feet, as a small (but a very honest) testimony of the constant truth, with which I am,

My dear friends,

Your ever obliged

And grateful,

L. STERNE.

P. S. My wife and daughter arrived here last night from France. — My girl has return'd an elegant accomplish'd little slut — my wife — but I hate to praise my wife — 'tis as much as decency will

will allow to praise my daughter. — I suppose they will return next summer to France. — They leave me in a month to reside at York for the winter — and I stay at Coxwold till the first of January.

## LETTER CV.

To Mrs. F——,

Coxwold, Friday,

Dear Madam,

I RETURN you a thousand thanks for your obliging enquiry after me — I got down last summer very much worn out — and much worse at the end of my journey — I was forced to call at his Grace's house (the Archbishop of York) to refresh myself a couple of days upon the road near Doncaster — Since I got home to quietness, and temperance, and good books, and good hours, I have mended — and am now very stout — and in a fortnight's time shall perhaps be as well as you yourself could wish me. — I have the pleasure to acquaint you that my wife and daughter are arrived from France. — I shall be in town to greet my friends by the first of January. — Adieu, dear madam — believe me

Yours sincerely,

L. S.

## LETTER -CVI.

To Mr. and Mrs. J——.

Coxwould, Nov. 12, 1767.

FORGIVE me, dear Mrs. J——, if I am troublesome in writing something betwixt a letter and a card, to enquire after you and my good friend Mr. J——, whom 'tis an age since I have heard a syllable of. — I think so however, and never more felt the want of a house I esteem so much, as I do now when I can hear tidings of it so seldom — and have nothing to recompence my desires of seeing its kind possessors, but the hopes before me of doing it by Christmas.— I long sadly to see you, — and my friend Mr. J—— I am still at Coxwould — my wife and girl\* here — She is a dear good creature — affectionate, and most elegant in body and mind — she is all Heaven could give me in a daughter — but like other blessings, not given but lent; for her mother loves France — and this dear part of me must be torn from my arms, to follow her mother, who seems

\* Mrs. Medalle thinks an apology may be necessary for publishing this letter — the best she can offer is — that it was written by a fond parent (whose commendations she is proud of) to a very sincere friend.

seems inclined to establish her in France where she has had many advantageous offers.—Do not smile at my weakness, when I say I do not wonder at it, for she is as accomplished a slut as France can produce. — You shall excuse all this—if you won't, I desire Mr. J— to be my advocate—but I know I do not want one. With what pleasure shall I embrace your dear little pledge—whom I hope to see every hour encreasing in stature, and in favour, both with God and man!—I kiss all your hands w th a most devout and friendly heart.—No man can wish you more good than your meager friend does—few so much, for I am with infinite cordiality, gratitude and honest affection,

My dear Mrs. J—,

Your very faithful,

L. STERNE.

P. S. My Sentimental Journey will please Mrs. J—, and my Lydia — I can answер for those two. It is a subject which works well, and suits the frame of mind I have been in for some time past — I told you my design in it was to teach us to love the world and our fellow creatures better than we do — so it runs most upon those gentler passions and affections, which aid so much to it.—Adieu, and may you and my worthy friend Mr. J— continue examples of the doctrine I teach.

## LETTER CVII.

To A. L—e, Esq.

Coxwold, Nov. 19, 1767.

YOU make yourself unhappy, dear L—e, by imaginary ills — which you might shun, instead of putting yourself in the way of — Would not any man in his sences fly from the object he adores, and not waste his time and his health in increasing his misery by so vain a pursuit? — The idol of your heart is one of ten thousand. — The duke of — has long sighed in vain — and can you suppose a woman will listen to you, that is proof against titles, stars, and red ribbands? — Her heart (believe me, L—e) will not be taken in by fine men, or fine speeches — if it should ever feel a preference, it will choose an object for itself, and it must be a singular character that can make an impression on such a being. — She has a platonic way of thinking, and knows love only by name. The natural reserve of her character, which you complain of, proceeds not from pride, but from superiority of understanding, which makes her despise every man that turns himself into a fool. — Take my advice, and pay your addresses to Miss — she esteems you, and time will wear off an attachment which has taken so deep a root in your heart. — I pity you from my soul; but we are all born with passions which ebb and flow

flow

flow (else they would play the devil with us) to different objects—and the best advice I can give you, L—e, is to turn the tide of yours another way. I know not whether I shall write again while I stay at Coxwould.—I am in earnest at my Sentimental Work---and intend being in town soon after Christmas—in the mean time adieu.—let me hear from you, and believe me, dear L.

Yours, &c.

L. STERNE.

L E T T E R C V I I I .

To the Earl of ——.

Coxwould, Nov. 28. 1767.

My Lord,

TIS with the greatest pleasure I take my pen to thank your lordship for your letter of enquiry about Yorick—he has worn out both his spirits and body with the Sentimental Journey—'tis true that an author must feel himself, or his reader will not—but I have torn my whole frame into pieces by my feelings—I believe the brain stands as much in need of recruiting as the body—therefore I shall set out for town the twentieth of next month, after having recruited myself a week at York,—I might indeed solace myself with my wife, (who is come from France) but in fact I have long been a sentimental being—what-

ever

ever your lordship may think to the contrary.---- The world has imagined, because I wrote Tristram Shandy, that I was myself more Shandean than I really ever was---'tis a good natured world we live in, and we are often painted in divers colours according to the ideas each one frames in his head.---- A very agreeable lady arrived three years ago at York, in her road to Scarborough--- I had the honour of being acquainted with her, and was her *chaperon*—all the females were very inquisitive to know who she was — “ Do not tell, ladies, 'tis a mistress my wife has recommended to me---nay moreover has sent her from France.”—

I hope my book will please you, my Lord, and then my labour will not be totally in vain. If it is not thought a chaste book, mercy upon them that read it, for they must have warm imaginations indeed ! — Can your lordship forgive my not making this a longer epistle ? In short, I can but add to this, which you already know——that I am with gratitude and friendship,

My Lord,  
Your obedient faithful,

L. STERNE.

If your Lordship is in town in Spring, I should be happy if you became acquainted with my friends in Gerrard-street—you would esteem the husband, and honour the wife—she is the reverse of most her sex—they have various pursuits——the but one—that of pleasing her husband.—

LET-

## LETTER CIX.

To A. L——e, Esq;

Coxwould, Dec. 7, 1767.

Dear L.

I SAID I would not perhaps write any more, but it would be unkind not to reply to so interested a letter as yours—I am certain you may depend upon Lord ——'s promises—he will take care of you in the best manner he can, and your knowledge of the world, and of languages in particular, will make you useful in any department—if his Lordship's scheme does not succeed, leave the kingdom—go to the east or to the west, for travelling would be of infinite service to both your body and mind — but more of this when we meet — now to my own affairs.—I have had an offer of exchanging two pieces of preferment I hold here, for a living of three hundred and fifty pounds a year, in Surry, about thirty miles from London, and retaining Coxwold, and my prebendship—the country also is sweet—but I will not, cannot come to any determination, till I have consulted with you, and my other friends—I have great offers too in Ireland—the bishops of C——, and R——, are both my friends—but I have rejected every proposal, unless Mrs. S. and my Lydia would accompany me thither—I live for the sake of my girl, and with

with her sweet light burthen in my arms, I could get up fast the hill of preferment, if I chose it---but without my Lydia, if a mitre was offered me, it would sit uneasy upon my brow.---Mrs. S--'s health is insupportable in England.---She must return to France, and justice and humanity forbid me to oppose it.---I will allow her enough to live comfortably, until she can rejoin me.---My heart bleeds, L---e, when I think of parting with my child---'twill be like the separation of soul and body---and equal to nothing but what passes at that tremendous moment ; and like it in one respect, for she will be in one kingdom, whilst I am in another.---You will laugh at my weakness---but I cannot help it---for she is a dear, disinterested girl.---As a proof of it---when she left Coxwold, and I bade her adieu, I pulled out my purse and offered her ten guineas for her private pleasures---her answer was pretty, and affected me too much. "No, my dear papa, our expences of coming from France may have straiten'd you---I would rather put an hundred guineas in your pocket than take ten out of it"---I burst into tears---but why do I practise on your feelings---by dwelling on a subject that will touch your heart ?--- It is too much melted already by its own suffering, L---, for me to add a pang, or cause a single sigh.---God bless you.---I shall hope to greet you by New-years-day in perfect health. Adieu, my dear friend--- I am most truly and cordially yours,

L. STERNE.

LET.

## LETTER CX.

To Mr. and Mrs. J..

York, Dec. 23, 1767.

I WAS afraid that either Mr. or Mrs. J.—, or their little blossom, was drooping—or that some of you were ill, by not having the pleasure of a line from you, and was thinking of writing again to enquire after you all—when I was cast down myself with a fever, and bleeding at my lungs, which had confined me to my room near three weeks—when I had the favour of yours, which till to-day I have not been able to thank you both kindly for, as I most cordially now do—as well as for all your professions and proofs of good-will to me.—I will not say I have not balanced accounts with you in this.—All I know is, that I honour and value you more than I do any good creatures upon earth—and that I could not wish your happiness, and the success of whatever conduces to it more than I do, was I your brother—but, good God ! are we not all brothers and sisters who are friendly, virtuous, and good ? Surely, my dear friends, my illness has been a sort of sympathy for your afflictions upon the score of your dear little one---I am worn down to a shadow---but as my fever has left me, I set off the latter end of next week with my friend Mr. Hall for town—I need not tell my friends in Gerrard-

Gerrard street, I shall do myself the honour to visit them, before either Lord — or Lord —, &c. &c. I thank you, my dear friend, for what you say so kindly about my daughter — it shews your good heart, for as she is a stranger, 'tis a free gift in you---but when she is known to you, she shall win it fairly—but, alas! when this event is to happen, is in the clouds.—Mrs. S. has hired a house ready furnished at York, till she returns to France, and my Lydia must not leave her!—

What a sad scratch of a letter! ----- but I am weak, my dear friends, both in body and mind, ---so God bless you---you will see me enter like a ghost ----- so I tell you before-hand not to be frightened. I am, my dear friends, with the truest attachment and esteem, ever yours,

L. STERNE.

### LETTER CXL.

To Lady P.

Mount Coffee-house, Tuesday, 3 o'Clock.

**T**H E R E is a strange mechanical effect produced in writing a billet-doux within a stone-cast of the lady who engrosses the heart and soul of an immorato--- for this cause (but mostly because I am to dine in this neighbourhood) have I, Tristram Shandy, come forth from my lodgings to a coffee-house the nearest I could find to

my

my dear lady \*\*\*\*'s house, and have called for a sheet of gilt paper, to try the truth of this article of my creed.—Now for it—

O my dear lady — what a dish-clout of a soul hast thou made of me ?——I think, by the bye, this is a little too familiar an introduction, for so unfamiliar a situation as I stand in with you —— where, Heaven knows, I am kept at a distance— and despair of getting one inch nearer you, with all the steps and windings I can think of to recommend myself to you—Would not any man in his senses run diametrically from you— and as far as his legs would carry him, rather than thus causelessly, foolishly, and fool-hardily expose himself afresh—afresh, where his heart and his reasons tells him he shall be sure to come off loser, if not totally undone?—Why would you tell me you would be glad to see me?— Does it give you pleasure to make me more unhappy—or does it add to your triumph, that your eyes and lips have turned a man into a fool, whom the rest of the town is courting as a wit?— I am a fool,— the weakest, the most ductile, the most tender fool, that ever woman tried the weakness of — and the most unsettled in my purposes and resolutions of recovering my right mind. — It is but an hour ago, that I kneeled down and swore I never would come near you — and after saying my Lord's Prayer for the sake of the close, of not being led into temptation—out I sallied like any Christian hero, ready to take the field against the world, the flesh, and the devil; not doubting but I should finally trample them all under my feet— and now I am got so near you — within this vile stone's cast of your house—I feel myself drawn into a vortex, that has turned my brain

brain upside downwards, and though I had purchased a box-ticket to carry me to Miss \*\*\*\*\*'s benefit, yet I know very well, that was a single line directed to me, to let me know Lady \_\_\_\_\_ would be at home at seven, and suffer me to spend the evening with her, she would infallibly see every thing verified I have told her. \_\_\_\_\_ I dine at Mr. C——r's in Wigmore-street, in this neighbourhood, where I shall stay till seven, in hopes you propose to put me to this proof. If I hear nothing by that time, I shall conclude you are better disposed of — and shall take a sorry hack, and sorrowly jogg on to the play — Curse on the word. I know nothing but sorrow — except this one thing, that I love you (perhaps foolishly, but)

most sincerely,

L. STERNE.

### LETTER CXII.

To Mr. and Mrs. J\_\_\_\_\_

Old Bond Street, January 1.

NO T knowing whether the moisture of the weather will permit me to give my kind friends in Gerrary-street a call this morning for five minutes — I beg leave to send them all the good wishes, compliments, and respects I owe them. — I continue to mend, and doubt not

not but this, with all other evils and uncertainties of life, will end for the best. I send all compliments to your fire-sides this Sunday night—Miss Ascough the wife, Miss Pigot the witty, your daughter the pritty, and so on. — If Lord O—— is with you, I beg my dear Mrs. J—— will present the inclosed to him—'twill add to the millions of obligations I already owe you.—I am sorry I am no subscriber to Soho this season—it deprives me of a pleasure worth twice the subscription—but I am going to send about this quarter of the town, too see if it is not too late to procure a ticket, undisposed of, from some of my Soho friends, and if I can succeed, I will either send or wait upon you with it by half an hour after three to-morrow — if not, my friend will do me the justice to believe me truly miserable.—I am half engaged, or more, for dinner on Sunday next, but will try to get disengaged in order to be with my friends.—If I cannot, I will glide like a shadow uninvited to Gerrard-street some day this week, that we may eat our bread and meat in love and peace together.—God bless you both ! —I am with the most sincere regard,

Your ever obliged,

L. STERNE.

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## LETTER CXIII.

To the same.

Old-Bond-Street, Monday.

My dear Friends,

I HAVE never been a moment at rest since I wrote yesterday about this Soho ticket—I have been at a Secretary of State, to get one — have been upon one knee to my friends Sir G— M—, Mr. Lafcelles — and Mr. Fitzmaurice — without mentioning five more — I believe I could as soon get you a place at court, for every body is going — but I will go out and try a new circle — and if you do not hear from me by a quarter after three, you may conclude I have been unfortunate in my supplications. — I send you this state of the affair, lest my silence should make you think I had neglected what I promised — but no — Mrs. J— knows me better, and would never suppose it would be out of the head of one who is with so much truth

Her faithful friend,

L. STERNE.

LET-

## LETTER CXIV.

To the same.

Thursday, Old Bond-street.

A THOUSAND thanks, and as many excuses, my dear friends, for the trouble my blunder has given you. By a second note I am astonished I could read Saturday for Sunday, or make any mistake in a card wrote by Mrs. J——'s, in which my friend is as unrival'd as in a hundred greater excellencies.

I am now tied down neck and heels (twice over) by engagements every day this week, or most joyfully would have trod the old pleasing road from Bond to Gerrard-street. —— My books will be to be had on Thursday, but possibly on Wednesday in the afternoon. —— I am quite well, but exhausted with a room full of company every morning till dinner — How do I lament I cannot eat my morsel (which is always sweet) with such kind friends! — The Sunday following I will assuredly wait upon you both — and will come a quarter before four, that I may have both a little time, and a little day-light, to see Mrs. J\*\*\*\*'s picture — — I beg leave to assure my friends of my gratitude for all their favours, with my sentimental thanks for every token of their good will. — — Adieu, my dear friends —

I am truly yours,

L. STERNE.

LET-

## LETTER CXV.

To L. S. Esq.

Old Bond Street, Wednesday.

Dear Sir,

YOUR commendations are very flattering. I know no one whose judgment I think more highly of, but your partiality for me is the only instance in which I can call it in question. Thanks, my good Sir, for the prints — I am much your debtor for them — if I recover from my ill state of health, and live to revisit Cox-would this summer, I will decorate my study with them, along with six beautiful pictures I have already of the sculptures on poor Ovid's tomb, which were executed on marble at Rome. — It grieves one to think that such a man should have dy'd in exile, who wrote so well on the art of love. — Do not think me encroaching if I solicit a favour — 'tis either to borrow, or beg (to beg if you please) some of those touched with chalk which you brought from Italy — I believe you have three sets, and if you can spare the imperfect one of cattle on colour'd paper, 'twill answer my purpose, which is namely this, to give a friend of ours. — You may be ignorant she has a genius for drawing, and whatever she excels in, she conceals, and her humility adds lustre to her accomplishments — I presented her last year with

with colours, and an apparatus for painting, and gave her several lessons before I left town. — I wish her to follow this art, to be a compleat mistress of it — and it is singular enough, but not more singular than true, that she does not know how to make a cow or a sheep, tho' she draws figures and landscapes perfectly well ; which makes me wish her to copy from good prints. — If you come to town next week, and dine where I am engaged next Sunday, call upon me and take me with you — I breakfast with Mr. Beauclerc, and am engaged for an hour afterwards with Lord — so let our meeting be either at your house or my lodgings — do not be late, for we will go half an hour before dinner, to see a picture executed by West, most admirably he has caught the character of our friend — such goodness is painted in that face, that when one looks at it, let the soul be ever so much un-harmonized, it is impossible it should remain so. — I will send you a set of my books — they will take with the generality — the women will read this book in the parlour, and Tristram in the bed-chamber. — Good night, dear sir — I am going to take my whey, and then to bed. Believe me,

Yours, most truly,

L. STERNE,

L E T.

## L E T T E R   C X V I .

February 20, Old Bond Street.

My dearest Lydia,

**M**Y Sentimental Journey, you say, is admired in York by every one — and 'tis not vanity in me to tell you that it is no less admired here — but what is the gratification of my feelings upon this occasion? — the want of health bows me down, and vanity harbours not in thy father's breast — this vile influenza — be not alarm'd, I think I shall get the better of it — and shall be with you both the first of May, and if I escape 'twill not be for a long period, my child — unless a quiet retreat and peace of mind can restore me. — The subject of thy letter has astonish'd me — She could but know little of my feelings, to tell thee, under the supposition I should survive thy mother, I should bequeath thee as a legacy to — — No, my Lydia; 'tis a lady, whose virtues I wish thee to imitate, that I shall entrust my girl to — I mean that friend whom I have so often talk'd and wrote about — from her you will learn to be an affectionate wife, a tender mother, and a sincere friend — and you cannot be intimate with her without her pouring some part of the milk of human kindness into your breast, which will serve to check the heat of your own temper, which you partake in a small degree of. — Nor will that amiable

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able woman put my Lydia under the painful necessity to fly to India for protection, whilst it is in her power to grant her a more powerful one in England. — But I think, my Lydia, that thy mother will survive me — do not deject her spirits with thy apprehensions on my account.—I have sent you a necklace, buckles, and the same to your mother. — My girl cannot form a wish that is in the power of her father, that he will not gratify her in — and I cannot in justice be less kind to thy mother. — I am never alone — The kindness of my friends is ever the same — I wish tho' I had thee to nurse me — but I am deny'd that. — Write to me twice a week, at least. — God bless thee, my child, and believe me ever, ever, thy

Affectionate father,

L. S.

## LETTER CXVII.

To Mrs. J——.

Tuesday.

YOUR poor friend is scarce able to write — he has been at death's door this week with a pleurisy — I was bled three times on Thursday, and blister'd on Friday — The physician says I am better — God knows, for I feel myself sadly wrong, and shall, if I recover, be a long while of gaining strength. — Before I have gone thro' half this letter, I must stop to rest

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my weak hand above a dozen times — Mr. J—— was so good to call upon me yesterday. I felt emotions not to be described at the sight of him, and he overjoy'd me by talking a great deal of you. — Do, dear Mrs. J——, entreat him to come to-morrow, or next day, for perhaps I have not many days, or hours, to live — I want to ask a favour of him, if I find myself worse — that I shall beg of you, if in this wrestling I come off conqueror — my spirits are fled — 'tis a bad omen — do not weep, my dear Lady — your tears are too precious to shed for me — bottle them up, and may the cork never be drawn. — Dearest, kindest, gentlest, and best of women! may health, peace and happiness prove your handmaids. — If I die, cherish the remembrance of me, and forget the follies which you so often condemn'd — which my heart, not my head, betray'd me into. Should my child, my Lydia, want a mother, may I hope you will (if she is left parentless) take her to your bosom — You are the only woman on earth I can depend upon for such a benevolent action. — I wrote to her a fortnight ago, and told her what, I trust, she will find in you — Mr. J—— will be a father to her — he will protect her from every insult, for he wears a sword which he has served his country with, and which would know how to draw out of the scabbard in defence of innocence — Commend me to him — as I now commend you to that Being who takes under his care the good and kind part of the world — Adieu — all grateful thanks to you and Mr. J——.

Your poor affectionate friend,

L. STERNE.

LET-

LETTER CXVIII.

To Mr B.

Exeter, July, 1775.

SIR,

THIS was quite an *Impromptu* of Yorick's after he had been thoroughly *soused*. — He drew it up in a few moments without stopping his pen. I should be glad to see it in your intended collection of Mr. Sterne's Memoirs, &c. If you should have a copy of it, you will be able to rectify a misapplication of a term that Mr. Sterne could never be guilty of, as one great excellency of his writings lies in the most happy choice of metaphors and allusions — such as shewed his philosophic judgment, at the same time that they displayed his wit and genius — but it is not for me to comment on, or correct so great an original. I should have sent this fragment as soon as I saw Mrs. Medalle's advertisement, had I not been at a distance from my paper. I expect much entertainment from this posthumous work of a man to whom no one is more indebted for amusement and instruction, than,

Sir,

Your humble servant,

S. P.

## A N I M P R O M P T U.

No — not one farthing would I give for such a coat in wet weather, or dry — If the sun shines you are sure of being melted, because it closes so tight about one --- If it rains it is no more a defence than a cobweb --- a very sieve, o' my conscience ! that lets through every drop, and like many other things that are put on only for a cover, mortifies you with disappointment and makes you curse the impostor, when it is too late to avail one's self of the discovery. Had I been wise I should have examined the claim the coat had to the title of "defender of the body."— before I had trusted my body in it --- I should have held it up to the light like other suspicious matters I have seen, how much it was likely to admit of that which I wanted to keep out --- whether it was no more than such a frail, flimsy contexture of flesh and blood, as I am fated to carry about with me through every tract of this dirty world, could have comfortably and safely dispensed within so short a journey --- taking into my account the chance of spreading trees — thick hedges o'erhanging the road — with twenty other coverts that a man may thrust his head under — if he is not violently pushed on by that d — d stimulus — you know where — that will not let a man sit still in one place for half a minute together — but like a young nettlesome tit is eternally on the fret, and is for pushing on still farther — or if the poor scared devil is not hunted tantivy by a hue and cry with a gibbet and halter dangling before

before his eyes — now in other cases he has not a minute to throw away in standing still, but like king Lear must brave “the peltings of a pitiless storm” and give heaven leave to “ramble its belly full — spit, fire, — or spout, rain,” — as spitefully as it pleaseth, without finding the inclination or the resolution to slacken his pace, lest something should be lost that might have been gained, or more gotten than he well knows how to have got rid of — Now had I acted with as much prudence as some other good folks I could name many of them who have been made b——ps in my remembrance for having been hooded and muffled up in a larger quantity of this dark drab of mental manufacture than ever fell to my share — and absolutely for nothing else — as will be seen when they are undressed another day — Had I had but as much as might have been taken out of their cloth, without lessening much of the size, or injuring in the least the shape, or contracting aught of the doublings and foldings, or continuing to a less circumference, the superb-sweep of any one cloak that any one b——p ever wrapt himself up in — I should never have given this coat a place upon my shoulders.

— I should have seen by the light at one glance, how little it would keep out of rain, by how little it would keep in of darkness — This a coat for a rainy day? do, pray, madam, hold it up to that window — did you ever see such an *illustrious* coat since the day you could distinguish between a coat and a pair of breeches? — My lady did not understand derivatives, and so she could not see quite through my splendid pun. Pope Sixtus would have blinded her with

the same “ darkness of excessive light.” What a flood of it breaks in thro’ this rent ? what an irradiation beams through that ? what twinklings — what sparklings as you weave it before your eyes in the broad face of the sun ? Make a fan out of it for the ladies to look at their gallants with at church — It has not served me for one purpose — it will serve them for two — This is coarse stuff — of worse manufacture than the cloth — put it to its proper use, for I love when things sort and join well — make a philtre \* of it — while there is a drop to be extracted — I know but one thing in the world that will draw, drain, or suck like it — and that is — neither wool nor flax — make — make — any thing of it, but a vile, hypocritical coat for me — for I never can say *sub Jove* (whatever Juno might) that “ it is a pleasure to be wet.”

L. STERNE.

\* This allusion is improper. A philtre originally signifies a love potion — and it is used as a noun from the verb *philitrate* — it must signify a *strainer*, not a *sucker* — cloth is sometimes used for the purpose of *draining* by means of its pores or capillary tubes, but its action is contrary to *filtration*. His meaning is obvious enough ; but as he drew up this fragment without stopping his pen, as I was informed, it is no wonder he erred in the application of some of his terms.

# The FRAGMENT.

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## C H A P. I.

*Shewing two Things ; first, what a Rabelaic Fellow LONGINUS RABELAICUS is, and secondly, how cavalierly he begins his Book.*

MY dear and thrice reverend brethren, as well archbishops and bishops, as the *rest* of the inferior clergy ! would it not be a glorious thing if any man of genius and capacity amongst us for such a work, was fully bent within himself, to sit down immediately and compose a thorough—stitch'd system of the KERUKOPÆDIA, fairly setting forth, to the best of his wit or memory, collecting for that purpose all that is needful to be known, and understood of that art ?

—Of what art, cried PANURGE ? Good God ! answered LONGINUS (making an exclamation, but taking care at the same time to moderate his voice) why, of the art of making all kinds of your theological, hebdodomical, rostrummical, humdrummical what d'ye call 'ems—I will be shot, quoth EPISTEMON, if all this story of thine of a roasted horse, is simply no more than S——Sausages ? quoth PANURGE. Thou hast fallen twelve feet and above five inches below the mark, answer'd EPISTEMON, for I hold them to be Sermons—which said word, (as I take

I take the matter) being but a word of low degree, for a book of high rhetoric—**LONGINUS RABELAICUS** was foreminded to usher and lead into his dissertation, with as much pomp and parade as he could afford; and for my own part, either I know no more of Latin than my horse, or the **KERUKOPAEDIA** is nothing but the art of making 'em—And why not, quoth **GYMNAST**, of preaching them when we have done?—Believe me, dear souls, this is half in half—and if some skilful body would but put us in a way to do this to some *tune*—Thou wouldst not have them *charted* surely, quoth **TRIBOLET**, laughing?—No, nor *canted* neither, quoth **GYMNAST**, crying!—but what I mean, my friends, says **LONGINUS RABELAICUS** (who is certainly one of the greatest criticks in the western world, and as Rabelaic a fellow as ever existed) what I mean says he, interrupting them both and resuming his discourse, is this, that if all the scattered rules of the **KERUKOPAEDIA** could be but once carefully collected into one code, as thick as **PANURGE**'s head, and the whole *cleanly digested*—(pooh, says Panurge, who felt himself aggrieved) and bound up, continued Longinus, by way of a regular institute, and then put into the hands of every licensed preacher in Great-Britain, and Ireland, just before he began to compose, I maintain it—I deny it flatly, quoth **PANURGE**—What? answered **LONGINUS RABELAICUS** with all the temper in the world.

## C H A P. II.

*In which the Reader will begin to form a Judgment, of what an Historical, Dramatical, Anecdotal, Allegorical, and Comical Kind of a Work he has got hold of.*

HOMENAS who had to preach next Sunday (before God knows whom) knowing nothing at all of the matter—was all this while at it as hard as he could drive in the very next room:—for having fouled two clean sheets of his own, and being quite stuck fast in the entrance upon his third general *division*, and finding himself unable to get either forwards or backwards with any grace—“Curse it,” says he, (thereby excommunicating every mother’s son who should think differently) “why may not a man lawfully call in for help in this, as well as any other human emergency?— So without any more argumentation, except starting up and nimming down from the top shelf but one, the second volume of CLARK—tho’ without any felonious intention in so doing, he had begun to clap me in (making a joint first) of five whole pages, nine round paragraphs, and a dozen and a half of good thoughts all of a row; and because there was a confounded high gallery—was transcribing it away like a little devil.—“Now”—quoth HOMENAS to himself, “tho’ I hold all this to be fair and square, yet, if I am found out, there will be the deuce and all to pay.”—*Why are the bells ringing backwards,*

wards, you lad? what is all that croud about, honest man? HOMENAS was got upon Doctor CLARK's back, sir---and what of that, my lad? Why an please you, he has broke his neck, and fractured his skull, and befouled himself in the bargain, by a fall from the pulpit two stories high. Alas! poor HOMENAS! HOMENAS has done his busineſſ!—HOMENAS will never preach more while breath is in his body.—No, faith, I shall never again be able to tickle it off as I have done.

I may sit up whole winter nights baking my blood with hectic watchings, and write as solid as a Father of the church—or, I may sit down whole summer days evaporating my spirits into the finest thoughts, and write as florid as a Mother of it.—In a word, I may compose myself off my legs, and preach till I burst—and when I have done, it will be worse than if not done at all.—Pray Mr. Such-a-one, who held forth last Sunday? Doctor CLARK, I trow, says one. Pray what Doctor CLARK, says a ſecond? Why HOMENAS's Doctor CLARK, quoth a thir'd. O rare HOMENAS! cries a fourth; your ſervant Mr. HOMENAS, quoth a fifth.—Twill be all over with me, by Heaven—I may as well put the book from whence I took it.—Here HOMENAS burst into a flood of tears, which falling down helter skelter, ding dong without any kind of intermission for ſix minutes and almost twenty-five ſeconds, had a marvellous effect upon his diſcourse; for the aforesaid tears, do you mind, did ſo temper the wind that was rising upon the aforesaid diſcourse, but falling for the moſt part perpendicularly, and hitting the ſpirits at right angles, which were mounting horizontally all over the ſurface of his harangue, they not only played

played the devil and all with the sublimity—but moreover the said tears, by their nitrous quality, did so refrigerate, precipitate, and hurry down to the bottom of his soul, all the unsavory particles which lay fermenting (as you saw in the middle of his conception, that he went on in the coolest and chasteſt ſtyle (for a *ſoliloquy* I think) that ever mortal man uttered.

" This is really and truly a very hard case, continued HOMENAS to himself"—PANURGE, by the bye, and all the company in the next room hearing all along every syllable he spoke; for you must know, that notwithstanding PANURGE had opened his mouth as wide as he could for his blood, in order to give a round answer to LONGINUS RABELAICUS's interroga-  
tion, which concluded the last chapter—yet HOMENAS's rhetoric had poured in fo like a torrent, flap-dash thro' the wainscot amongst them, and happening at that *uncritical* crisis, when PANURGE had just put his ugly face into the aboveſaid posture of defence—that he ſtopt short—he did indeed, and tho' his head was full of matter, and he had ſcrewed up every nerve and muscle, belonging to it, till all cry'd *crack* again, in order to give a due projectile force of what he was going to let fly, full in LONGINUS RABELAI-  
CUS's teeth who ſat over againſt him.—Yet all this, he had the continence to contain himſelf, for he ſtopt short, I ſay, without uttering one word except, Z....ds—many reasons may be assigned for this, but the moſt true, the moſt ſtrong, the moſt hydroſtatical, and the moſt philosophical reason, why PANURGE did not go on, was—that the fore-mentioned *torrent* did ſo drown his voice, that he had none left to go on with.

with.—God help him, poor fellow! so he stopt short, (as I have told you before) and all the time HOMENAS was speaking he said not another word, good or bad, but stood gaping, and staring, like what you please—so that the break, marked thus—which HOMENAS's grief had made in the middle of this discourse, which he could no more help than he could fly—produced no other change in the room where LONGINUS RABELAICUS, EPISTEMON, GYMNAST, TRIBOULET, and nine or ten more honest blades had got Kerukopædizing together, but that it gave time to GYMNAST to give PANURGE a good squashing chuck under his double chin; which PANURGE taking in good part, and just as it was meant by GYMNAST, he forthwith shut his mouth—and gently sitting down upon a stool though somewhat excentrically and out of his neighbours row, but listening, as all the rest did, with might and main, they plainly and distinctly heard every syllable of what you will find recorded in the very next chapter.

F I N I S.